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Message Text

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ACTION H-03

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R 081420Z SEP 75
FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
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UNCLAS STOCKHOLM 4456

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OREP (HUMPHREY, HUBERT H.)
SUBJECT: SENATOR HUMPHREY'S STOCKHOLM VISIT

REF: STATE 185010

1. SUMMARY: SENATOR HUMPHREY VISITED STOCKHOLM SEPTEMBER 2-5 AS GUEST OF THE BANK OF SWEDEN TERCENTARY FUND. GOS, INCLUDING PRIME MINISTER PALME, WENT OUT OF THEIR WAY TO TREAT HIM AS AN HONERED GUEST. NEAR-SATURATION MEDIA COVERAGE OF HIS VISIT WAS POSITIVE THROUGHOUT, MARRED BY NARY A CRITICAL NOTE. THE POST REGARDS HIS VISIT AS HAVING MADE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO STRENGTHENING SWEDISH-AMERICAN RELATIONS AND REAFFIRMING TRADITIONAL TIES OF FRIENDSHIP.

2. SENATOR HUMPHREY, CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT ECONOMICAL COMMITTEE, VISITIED SWEDEN SEPTEMBER 2-5 AS GUEST OF THE BANK OF SWEDEN'S TERCENTARY FUND. THE OSTENSIBLE PURPOSE OF HIS VISIT WAS TO DELIVER THE CLOSING ADDRESS, SEPTEMBER 3, AT A FUND SUPPORTED CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ASSOCIATION ON "INFLATION THEORY AND ANTI-INFLATION POLICY." IN ADDITION HE HAD IN-DEPTH DISCUSSIONS WITH PRIME MINISTER OLOF PALME, FOREIGN MINISTER SVEN ANDERSSON, FINANCE MINISTER GUNNAR STRANG, MINISTER OF HOUSING INGVAR CARLSSON, FORMER PRIME MINISTER TAGE ERLANDER, PROFESSOR GUNNAR MYRDAL AND AMBASSADOR ALVA MYRDAL, PROFESSOR BERTIL OHLIN (ECONOMIST) AS WELL AS WITH U.S. AMBASSADOR STRAUSZ-HUPE' AND MANY OTHER GOVERNMENT, LABOR AND BUSINESS LEADERS.
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3. HIGH POINTS OF HIS VISIT WERE AN ARRIVAL AIRPORT PRESS CONFERENCE, A BUFFET DINNER AT THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE, VISIT WITH MEMBERS OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEEOF THE SWEDISH PARLIAMENT, HIS SPEECH (ATTENDED BY PALME) ON "ECONOMIC POLICY PERSPECTIVES -- THE TASK AHEAD" BEFORE A LARGE GOROUP OF DISTINGUISHED INTERNATIONAL ECONOMISTS AT THE ABOVE-MENTIONED CONFERENCE, AN 18-HOUR STAY AT HARPSUND (THE GOS'S COUNTRY GUEST HOURSE, SITE OF MANY TOP-LEVEL MEETINGS), A PRESS CONFERENCE AT STOCKHOLM'S GRAND HOTEL, A VISIT WITH THE MYRDALS, AND A SMALL DINNER HOSTED BY THE SWEDISH INDUSTRY ASSOICATION. THE SENATOR WAS ACCOMPANIED BY HIS STAFF ASSISTANT, NEAL PETERSON; JOHN STARK EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE; AND DR. JOHN P. HARDT, CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE. STARK AND HARDT ATTENDED SESSIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CONFERENCE MENTIONED ABOVE.

4. ACCORDING TO HIS AIDES, HUMPHREY'S PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS WITH SWEDISH LEADERS ROAMED WIDELY AND TOUCHED ON MANY SUBJECTS-ENERGY ISSUES; MIDDLE EAST; PORTUGAL; QUESTION OF SUCCESSION IN THE USSR AND PRC; STATE OF THE ECONOMY WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON UNEMPLOYMENT AND INFLATION; THE FOOD CRISES; WORKERS' OWNERSHIIP OF FIRMS; AND OTHERS. OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO HIM AS AUTHOR OF "THE BALANCED GROWTH AND ECONOMIC PLANNING ACT OF 1975 WERE SWEDISH APPROACHES TO ECONOMIC SURVEYS AND PLANNING.

5. OBSERVERS REMARKED THAT HUMPHREY'S VISIT WAS TREATED BY THE GOS THE WAY IT USUALLY TREATS THAT OF A HEAD OF STATE; A GOS LIMOUSINE WAS PLACED AT HIS DISPOSAL, AND A POLICE ESOCRT AND HELICOPTER TRANSPORTATION WERE PROVIDED WHENEVER NECESSARY. ABOVE ALL, THE VISIT WAS MARKED BY AN EXTRAORDINARY AMOUNT OF MEDIA COVERAGE, NEARLY ALL OF IT FRIENDLY. HIS PRESS CONFERENCES, HIS IEA SPEECH, AND HIS VISIT TO HARPSUND WERE THOROUGHLY COVERED BY THE PRESS, TV , AND RADIO. IN ADDITION ALL THREE MEDIA FEATURED SPECIAL INTERVIEWS WITH THE SENATOR AND REPORTAGES ON HIS ACTIVITIES. BOTH TV CHANNELS IN THEIR MAJOR EVENING NEWS SHOWS DEVOTED SEVERAL LONG SPOTS TO HUMPHREY'S VISIT. ADVANCE STORIES ON HUMPHREY APPEARED IN SEVERAL LEADING PAPERS ON THE EVE OF HIS ARRIVAL; "DAGENS NYHETER," E.G., SENT ITS WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT TO MINNESOTA TO DO A STORY ON HUMPHREY WHICH APPEARED IN DN'S SEPTEMBER 1 EDITION UNDER THE HEADLINE "THEY CALL HIM USA'S CHURCHILL." THE MEDIA
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DISPLAYED SPECIAL INTEREST IN THE SENATOR'S PLANS AND VIEWS REGARDING THE 1976 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS;
IN ADDITION THEY REPORTED HIS VIEWS ON SUCH SUBJECTS AS CONGRESS'S ACTIONS RE THE U.S. PEACE ROLE IN THE SINAI ("I BELIEVE CONGRESS WILL APPROVE THE ACCORDS, EVEN THOUGH UNWILLINGLY"), U.S. - SWEDISH RELATIONS ("BETTER THAN PREVIOUSLY AND WILL IMPROVE FURTHER"), PORTUGAL, GEORGE WALLACE, THE CIA, UNEMPLOYMENT, SECRETARY KISSINGER ("HE DID A FIRST-RATE JOB IN THE MIDDLE

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EAST"), AND THE REOPENING OF A U.S. CONSULATE GENERAL IN GOTHENBURG ("I WILL CONTINUE TO WORK FOR THIS"). THE GENERAL TONE OF THE NEAR-SATURATION MEDIA COVERAGE WAS MARRED BY NARY A CRITICAL NOTE; IT WAS SET BY THE PRE-ARRIVAL PRESS STORIES WHICH BUILT UP HUMPHREY AS "THE FOREMOST FRIEND OF SWEDEN IN THE USA" (SVENSKA DAGBLADET).

6. CONCLUSION - HUMPHREY'S THREE-DAY VISIT TO STOCKHOLM MUST BE REGARDED AS HAVING MADE IN BALANCE A REAL CONTRIBUTION TO STRENGTHENING AMERICAN-SWEDISH RELATIONS AND REAFFIRMING THE TRADIIONAL TIES BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. ALTHOUGH HE VOICED AT TIMES CRITICIAL VIEWS OF NIXON AND FORD ADMINISTRATION, HUMPHREY MAINLY PRESENTED HIMSELF AS A WELL-INFORMED AND KEENLY INTERESTED FRIEND OF SWEDEN. ON THE SWEDISH SIDE HIS VISIT WAS MARKED BOTH ON THE PART OF THE GOS AND THE MEDIA BY THE OUTSTRETCHED HAND OF FRIENDSHIP AND A GOODWILL THAT WENT OUT OF ITS WAY TO MAKE THIS AMERICAN "ELDER STATEMAN" (SVENSKA DAGBLADET) FEEL WELCOME IN SWEDEN.
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